

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:
 - locating a probe in contact with the patient's skin for measuring an electrical signal of a dermal area near a meridian;
 - contacting, with an isolation hood of said probe, the dermal area;
 - actuating a motor and feedback loop to apply pressure to a probe tip independent of the pressure on the isolation hood against the skin; and
 - measuring, at the skin, an electrical attribute corresponding to said meridian.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein locating a dermal area further comprises providing a point locator for indicating a dermal location having a substantially greater electrical signal values than a surrounding dermal area, said point locator configured to produce audible signals indicating said dermal location.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said probe further comprises:
 - a biasing element operably connected to probe tip to control at least one of the following:
 - a) the rate that pressure is applied to probe tip, and
 - b) the amount of pressure applied to probe tip
4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the biasing element is controlled via a feedback loop to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said probe tip further comprises: a convex conductive base; and an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said convex conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said applying pressure to said probe further comprises:

stabilizing said probe against said dermal area;

iteratively measuring a electrical signal value of said dermal area as said pressure increases;

iteratively comparing a present electrical signal value of said dermal area corresponding to a present amount of pressure to a previous electrical signal value corresponding to a previous amount of pressure; and;

changing said future amount of pressure when said present electrical signal value is substantially different than said previous electrical signal value.

7. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

locating a dermal area of said patient approximating a meridian;

contacting, with a probe, said dermal area, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said dermal area;

a probe tip operably connected to said biasing element to apply a pressure to said dermal area;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin;

a biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal and adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said meridian.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said locating a dermal area further comprises providing a point locator for indicating a dermal location having a substantially greater bioelectric conductance value than a surrounding dermal area, said point locator configured to produce audible signals indicating said location.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said probe further comprises: a conductive base; and

an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value.

11. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

measuring relative conductance of a dermal area of said patient proximate a meridian; contacting with a probe the skin, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said location;

a probe tip operably connected to said biasing element to apply a pressure to said location;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin; and a biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal

and adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said meridian.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said measuring relative conductance of a dermal area further comprises:

iteratively measuring a bioelectric conductance value of a surface of said dermal area;
iteratively comparing a first said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a first surface location to a second said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a second surface location;
audibly indicating a dermal location where said second bioelectric conductance value is substantially greater than said first bioelectric conductance value.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said probe further comprises:

a conductive base; and
an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~12~~ 11, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value corresponding to said pressure.

15. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

providing electrical feedback to a probe that is configured for measuring an electrical signal of a dermal area near a meridian by contacting the dermal area with said probe and actuating a motor in concert with the electrical feedback to apply

pressure to a probe tip independent of the pressure on an isolation hood against the skin;
using the electrical feedback to determine when to stop applying the pressure to the probe tip;
measuring an electrical attribute at the patient's skin corresponding to said meridian.

16. (withdrawn) A computer program product for implementing within a system a method for utilizing electrical feedback in obtaining an electrical signal from a patient, the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium for providing computer program code means utilized to implement the method, wherein the computer program code means is comprised of executable code for implementing the steps for:
initiating electrical feedback to a probe, wherein the probe is configured for measuring an electrical signal of a dermal area near a meridian by contacting the dermal area with said probe and actuating a motor in concert with the electrical feedback to apply pressure to a probe tip independent of the pressure on an isolation hood against the skin;
using the electrical feedback to determine when to stop applying the pressure to the probe tip as a result of having measured an electrical attribute corresponding to said maridian.